

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 and cancelled claims 8 - 14. Claims 1-5, and 7 remain pending in the present application and reconsideration of these pending claims is respectfully requested. The rejections of the office action dated September 20, 2006 will be considered in the order of their occurrence in the Official Action.

Claims 9-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 9-14 have been cancelled by the present amendment.

Claims 10-12 recite the limitation "said transition surface" in line 1. There is insufficient antecedent basis for this limitation in the claims.

Claims 10-12 have been cancelled by the present amendment.

Claims 9-11, 13-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Simpson et al. 5,327,945.

Claims 9-11 and 13-14 have been cancelled by the present amendment.

Claims 1-5,7 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Simpson et al. 5,327,945 in view of Dalhart et al. 5,765,609.

Independent Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of previously presented dependent claim 8. Per the Official Action, previously presented claim 8 was identified to be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claim 1 is now believed to be in a state of allowance. Claims 2-5 and 7 are now dependent upon amended independent Claim 1 and are also believed to be allowable.

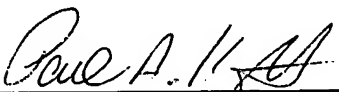
Claims 8,12 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Claim 1 has been amended to include the limitations of previously presented dependent claim 8.

Conclusions

Applicant respectfully requests that early reconsideration and allowance of this application be given. Should the Examiner consider necessary or desirable any formal changes anywhere in the specification, claims and/or drawings, then it is respectfully asked that such changes be made by Examiner's Amendment, if the Examiner feels this would facilitate passage of the this case to issuance. Alternatively, should the Examiner feel that a personal discussion might be helpful in advancing this case to allowance, they are invited to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,



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Date

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